



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

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Army to start weapons disposal in Arkansas

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) today announced that the Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (PBCDF) in Arkansas is expected to begin destroying chemical weapons on Tuesday, March 29.

The Pine Bluff facility is the sixth CMA facility to commence disposal operations as the agency pursues its mission of safely eliminating the nation's chemical weapons stockpile.

“CMA continues to make great strides in our efforts to rid the nation of its stockpiled chemical weapons,” said Michael Parker, Director of the Chemical Materials Agency. “CMA has considerable expertise now at work in Arkansas. We have a proven track record in the safe storage, recovery, assessment, treatment and elimination of millions of pounds of chemical agent.”

The PBCDF is slated to destroy approximately 12 percent of the originally declared chemical weapons stockpile stored at the Pine Bluff Arsenal. The Pine Bluff stockpile consists of nerve agents GB and VX and mustard blister agents HT and HD. The liquid agents are contained in rockets, land mines and bulk containers.

Disposal operations are planned for later this year at the agency's only remaining non-operational disposal facility in Newport, Ind. All weapons at CMA's Johnston Atoll disposal plant in the Pacific Ocean were destroyed in 2000. Currently, chemical weapons are being destroyed in Tooele, Utah; Anniston, Ala.; and Umatilla, Ore. The agency's Aberdeen, Md., disposal facility recently completed destruction of its stockpile of the blister agent mustard (HD) and is cleaning bulk containers that had contained mustard agent. Stockpile disposal activities are currently in the design phase at the Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky., and Pueblo Chemical Depot, Colo., which are managed by the Department of Defense's Program Manager for Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives.

As of March 17, 2005, CMA has safely destroyed 1,470,912 munitions containing 11,199 tons of chemical agent, amounting to more than 35 percent of the original agent tons stockpiled in the United States.

**For more information,
contact the
Chemical Materials
Agency Public
Affairs Office.**

www.cma.army.mil

CMA partners with government, public and private organizations that oversee the chemical weapons disposal process. Chemical weapons are being destroyed in compliance with an international treaty known as the Chemical Weapons Convention, which has now been signed by 167 countries including the United States. The treaty mandates that chemical agent stockpiles be

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destroyed by 2007, allowing for a one-time, five-year extension to 2012. The international group charged with overseeing treaty compliance is the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

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The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency is responsible for safely storing and eliminating the United States' aging chemical weapons and agent stockpiles and for the safe elimination of recovered chemical materiel.

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